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ABSTRACT

In September, 1989, the President and the nation's governors held what they called an "Education Summit" in Charlottesville, Virginia. They declared that they would establish national goals for education. Following the summit, a communique was issued listing goals in seven areas: (1) the readiness of children to start school; (2) performance of students on international achievement tests, especially math and science; (3) reduction of the dropout rate and improvement of academic performance, especially among at-risk students; (4) functional literacy of adult Americans; (5) level of training necessary to guarantee a competitive work force; (6) supply of qualified teachers and up-to-date technology; and (7) safe, disciplined and drug-free schools. Four broader context issues addressed in the summit communique that should be on the agenda of federal and state policymakers are flexibility and accountability, restructuring, federal government's financial role, and assuring accountability. Important issues absent from the communique are listed as well. (SI)

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Some Points to Make When You Talk About the SUMMIT

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THE SUMMIT

A RESPONSE TO THE SEPTEMBER 28, 1989 NATIONAL EDUCATION SUMMIT

The President and the nation's governors held what they called an "Education Summit" during September of 1989 in Charlottesville, Virginia. In their historic "Jeffersonian Compact," they declared that they would establish national goals for education.

Following the Summit, a communique was issued listing seven "goals" and four broader context issues. An announcement was made that these statements would serve as a basis for further discussion and goal setting.

The "goals" are:

- The readiness of children to start school. (page 3)
- The performance of students on international achievement tests, especially in math and science. (page 4)
- The reduction of the dropout rate and improvement of academic performance, especially among at-risk students. (page 6)
- The functional literacy of adult Americans. (page 8)

- The level of training necessary to guarantee a competitive workforce. (page 9)
- The supply of qualified teachers and up-to-date technology. (page 11)
- The establishment of safe, disciplined and drug-free schools. (page 12)

The four broader context issues are:
- Flexibility and accountability. (page 14)
- Restructuring. (page 15)
- The federal government's financial role. (page 16)
- Assuring accountability. (page 17)

Local educational leaders are deeply committed to making schools even more effective. The American Association of School Administrators (AASA) is pleased that the President, the President's Cabinet and the governors met, identified important issues, and put themselves "on the line" for the nation's schools.

Following the historic Summit conference, AASA convened a task force of administrators from across the nation to make recommendations to the President and governors on each of the Summit's eleven "goals" or issues, and to stimulate even further discussion and action. This publication is a direct result of the deliberations of that blue ribbon task force, which found the Summit issues familiar and interrelated.

We urge every school leader to review the commentary and recommendations presented in this publication, and to use it as a starting point for further communication and action. School leaders should consider proactively sharing this information with their governors, members of their state legislatures, their communities and the news media.

AASA commends the President and the governors for their interest in education. It is our deepest hope that this interest will be reflected in even greater levels of support for our nation's schools.

ISSUE NO. 1
THE READINESS OF CHILDREN TO START SCHOOL

Growing numbers of children and youth are at risk of school failure. Why? More and more of our nation's young people are living in poverty. Families are coming apart. Too often, children suffer from low self-esteem. Some educators express alarm that because of worsening social and economic conditions, increasing numbers of children are starting school "light years behind."

Most thoughtful observers agree that problems leading to school failure often start early. Therefore, these problems cannot be addressed without immediate and comprehensive expansion of early childhood education.

Getting children ready for school is not just an issue for disadvantaged families. By the time they are three years old, more than two-thirds of the children in this country spend at least part of the day in the care of people other than their parents. Without adequate, quality attention during these important years, children may enter school without the self-esteem and maturity needed to be successful.

Early childhood programs should be developmentally appropriate. They should, to the extent possible, involve parents and even help in the development of parenting skills. In addition, these programs should help ensure a high quality environment for the very young, who will ultimately inherit our nation and its leadership.

RECOMMENDATIONS

• ***Adequate funding must be provided to support early childhood education programs, facilities and appropriately trained and compensated staff.*** While young children need a stable environment, staff turnover in early childhood education programs is alarmingly high.

• ***Early childhood education services should be available to all who need and want them.***

• ***Programs should be developmentally appropriate, and based on research and experience.*** Truly effective early childhood education focuses on the growth and development of children and does not simply force regular academic programs down to an earlier age.

According to research, forcing academics too soon can cause an early cycle of failure for many children.

- ***Training and support for parents as their child's first and most important teacher should be a vital part of early childhood education programs.*** Parent involvement is essential. However, so is parent responsibility. Businesses can contribute by offering parents release time for parent-teacher conferences. Schools could make an even greater contribution by offering extended before and after school care, provided financial support is available.
- ***Political support is needed for early childhood education.*** Communities, including schools; social and health agencies; states; and the federal government should consider themselves partners in providing the best possible early start for children. For example, Head Start should be fully funded.
- ***Awareness must be heightened of the fact that growing numbers of children come to school already at great risk of school failure, reflecting worsening social and economic conditions affecting youth.*** Building self-esteem and school readiness is made even more difficult among children whose parents are also children, those who suffer child abuse, and those who are "crack babies" and "AIDS babies." These problems will weigh on schools and society for many years and, at this point, their effects cannot be fully measured.
- ***Developmentally appropriate early childhood education programs should focus on a child's capacity to stay in school and be successful rather than on high stakes tests or academic performance at this early age.***

ISSUE NO. 2

THE PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS ON INTERNATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT TESTS, ESPECIALLY MATH AND SCIENCE

Defining a national goal in terms of test score performance is too narrow. To think that simply scoring well on batteries of tests will solve the nation's problems in economic competition or ensure a citizenry capable of maintaining a democracy is shortsighted. A more appropriate national goal would be to recom-

mend standards and provide needed resources to ensure American students can meet high academic expectations, including but extending beyond math and science. As a nation, we should also be asking whether we are assessing the right things and whether existing tests can even measure the true qualities of people that lead to national success.

This issue, identified by the President and governors during the Summit, is the only one that refers to the content of what students learn. Therefore, it is of great importance.

However, any goal setting involving curriculum, if it is to lead to higher performance of students, must consider the deeper purposes of education, purposes that must extend beyond economic competition. Communities, states and our nation must consider priorities within the curriculum.

All students should have access to the most challenging content available across the full spectrum of essential knowledge, taught by those who believe in success for all students. The resources must be provided to make that possible.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ***As a nation, we must define, clearly and concisely, what young people who graduate from high school need to know and be able to do to function in the 21st Century.*** This process of establishing definitions should be collaborative and should consider the need for responsible people who are good citizens, productive workers, nurturing parents and contributors to the civic good.

- ***These broad expectations should become a part of the fabric of teaching and learning from the very earliest years of schooling.*** A "habit of mind" that leads people to become competent in every aspect of life is developed early, long before a young person makes academic choices in high school.

- ***Policymakers must make long-term commitments to supporting schools as they improve the content of what is taught, and as they seek the best tools and methods for teaching it.*** These changes will not be possible through "quick fixes," such as simply setting higher graduation standards without an equal commitment to program improvement. Support will be re-

quired to meet a host of needs ranging from research to staff training.

- ***Instruction in schools should be flexible enough to accommodate differences in learning styles and the amount of time needed for individual students to learn certain bodies of knowledge or skills.*** Policymakers should help communicate this important message to their communities, states and nation.
- ***Policymakers and others must join educators in conveying to the public the need for a challenging curriculum that is both broad and deep.*** Building support for higher expectations is often difficult because of conflicting values expressed by many families, communities and other "educating" influences, such as the news media.
- ***Student assessment policies should be brought into line with what we want young people to know and be able to do, and should support the collection of diagnostic data that will help professional educators self-correct programs as needed.*** For example, these assessments should provide ongoing feedback for teachers and generally support the education process, not simply rate students, schools, school systems and states.

ISSUE NO. 3
REDUCTION OF THE DROPOUT RATE/IMPROVEMENT OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE, ESPECIALLY AMONG AT-RISK YOUTH

Our nation has made great strides in its quest to keep students in school. In the 1950s, the dropout rate, according to generally accepted statistics, was nearly 50 percent. Today, it is approximately 25 percent.

This progress should only be a beginning. Therefore, we need to develop common definitions of the problem and establish more reliable data on the dropout rate–its numbers; racial, class and ethnic differences; causes; and long-term effects. Currently, data gathering on dropouts among states is insufficient and yields little usable information.

Conditions that lead to students dropping out of school start early. Therefore, a major focus must extend beyond the secondary school to ensuring that children are successful learners from the very beginning.

Policymakers, in dealing with the dropout problem and in encouraging higher levels of academic performance, need to consider the attitudes and contributions of parents; the need for excellent preschool education; rigid state mandates that prohibit remedies and often force students into failure and out of school; changing values; social and economic pressures affecting young people; the need to provide diverse programs for a diverse population; and the lack of hope created when businesses pay only the minimum wage or send their work outside the country.

Our nation must be prepared to make the most constructive use possible of every young person's knowledge, abilities and talents. Without broad-based support, a young person might simply give up on the system, drop out of school, engage in self-destructive behavior, or seek his or her fortune through illegal means. The solution to the dropout problem lies with all of society, not just the schools.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ***All agencies serving children and youth should work together to provide consistent and quality support with a primary focus on the client.*** Federal and state governments could set an example by coordinating their services to children and families.

- ***Federal, state and local programs serving children and youth should always receive long-term support.*** It is disastrous public policy, and devastating to children, when beneficial programs are instituted, then withdrawn when the political agenda or fiscal resources change. Programs serving young people should be protected from policy swings or political whim. Further, federal and state lawmakers must realize that only their resources can provide the "venture capital" school districts need to help remedy these massive problems of society.

- ***Programs focused on students who are at risk of dropping out of school need to be flexible.*** Slavish adherence to generalized, inappropriate regulations can actually prohibit non-traditional approaches needed to keep some students in school. In some cases, students should be given the option of taking a longer time to complete the high school curriculum. Teachers and principals need sup-

port to be flexible, to exercise options, if they are to be successful in helping students stay in school and meet increasingly higher standards.

• ***Resources must be provided to help at-risk students meet high expectations.*** For example, administrators and teachers nationwide want to provide even more challenging programs for disadvantaged students. However, the federal government currently provides funding to serve only 18 percent of children eligible for Head Start and only about 40 percent of students eligible for Chapter 1 programs for the disadvantaged.

ISSUE NO. 4
THE FUNCTIONAL LITERACY OF ADULT AMERICANS

How many people in the United States are functionally illiterate? Some put the figure at 30 million. However, most thoughtful observers know that our nation lacks a hard and fast definition of functional literacy.

A recent study by the National Assessment for Educational Progress (NAEP) found that only a small percentage of young adults are illiterate, in terms of minimal skills. However, only a small percentage proved to be proficient at the highest levels of literacy.

A large percentage of today's adults came through the school system when graduation rates were much lower. Until the massive workplace changes of the past few years, most high school dropouts could be absorbed into the economy in jobs that required little more than minimum academic skills.

The situation has changed. Consequently, the U.S. faces a serious adult literacy problem. The workplace, in many cases, is demanding high school graduates with enhanced skills and abilities. Many adults already in the workplace must upgrade their skills just to be in competition for jobs. At the same time, scores of immigrants have come to America, placing a special burden on education resources. Schools are expected to bring these immigrants into the mainstream more quickly and efficiently than in the past.

RECOMMENDATIONS

• ***Our nation must agree on a definition of what constitutes a literate adult; and that definition, if possi-***

ble, should serve as a guidepost for several decades to come.

- ***All available resources, including the public schools, should be used to enhance adult education and give all Americans an opportunity to improve their knowledge and skills.***

- ***An investment should be made in upgrading adult literacy programs. A firm research base and specialized training of people are needed to support adult education.*** Too often, adults are being taught using techniques that were not effective with them the first time around. Therefore, greater knowledge is needed about what works in adult education.

- ***The pattern of intergenerational illiteracy should be broken by drawing parents into effective adult literacy programs.*** Young parents who dropped out of school with insufficient skills will likely pass on their low levels of literacy to their children unless the cycle is broken. Therefore, programs such as Even Start need to be offered to bring literacy to those who are illiterate. Those programs should be universally available.

- ***Special funding should be provided to expand literacy programs for new immigrant populations.*** Those programs should use proven techniques in the education of second-language acquisition students.

ISSUE NO. 5
THE LEVEL OF TRAINING NECESSARY TO GUARANTEE A COMPETITIVE WORKFORCE

Nothing is quite so inconsistent as the descriptions of a competitive workforce. Business leaders say they need employees with higher-level thinking skills. Ironically, many of their personnel departments don't seek those skills in most people they hire. Some say today's and tomorrow's worker will need highly developed technical skills (since even fixing a car has, in some cases, become a feat of electrical engineering). Others speak of our nation becoming a "service economy." Then, there are those who say we'll need both people who can perform rote, repetitive tasks, and those who can effectively think and reason.

Most agree that success on the job often depends on social skills; the ability to communicate; the ability

to read, comprehend and draw inferences; problem-solving skills; and a good attitude about work.

From this virtual maze of opinions and demands, our nation needs to define what constitutes a competitive workforce. What type of training is needed? What can we do to ease the transition from school to work? What role should schools and industry each be expected to play?

While the immediate demands of the workplace are vitally important, the long-term dynamism of the American economy will depend on a workforce that can adjust to rapid change, a workforce that has been equipped with the skills of lifelong learning. Therefore, any discussion of workforce training needs to consider the delicate balance between immediate and long-range goals, between workers for today and a workforce for tomorrow.

The productivity of a workforce has its roots in the culture of a society. Therefore, the expectation that any single institution can solve this problem is unrealistic.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ***Consensus should be reached on the skills needed in the workplace, considering the fact that many young people will be confronted with constant change during their careers.***
- ***Schools and business leaders should collaborate in reaching consensus on both their common and separate responsibilities for training a young workforce.*** These efforts could be an extension of school-business partnerships that have been growing over the past several years.

- ***Sequential and consistent opportunities need to be provided to help young people move from school into the workforce.*** Coordination will be required among training programs such as: vocational education, the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), Family Support Act, workplace literacy programs, and U.S. Department of Labor apprenticeship programs, as well as employment/job placement services at the state and local levels.
- ***Flexibility in funding of state and federal programs should allow schools to establish exit-level employability skills that fit their students and communities.***
- ***Businesses should provide an environment for***

young people in the workplace that is as stimulating as the one they expect schools to provide. Business leaders must also understand that cutbacks in wages, health insurance programs and other benefits, as well as poor chances for advancement, cause many young people to give up hope and lose interest in school.

ISSUE NO. 6
SUPPLY OF QUALIFIED TEACHERS/UP-TO-DATE TECHNOLOGY

While estimates of the teacher shortage vary, four-fifths of the states anticipate shortages during the next five years. Some of those shortfalls will be in specific fields such as bilingual and special education and in math and science.

All school systems in the nation currently are experiencing an alarming shortage of minority teachers. We say "all" school systems because it is in the best interest of our increasingly diverse society that every student, no matter his or her community demography, experience the advantage of a culturally diverse teaching force.

If we as a nation hope to attract our brightest and best into education careers, then we must squarely face issues such as competitive salaries and the environment of teaching. Efforts to improve these conditions are under way in many communities. However, they should become even more commonplace across the nation. All Americans should be concerned about improving the status and professionalism of teaching and administration.

What else might our nation do to attract and keep an outstanding teaching force? There are many answers, including better initial training for all teachers, ongoing inservice training to keep teachers on the cutting edge, coaching that goes beyond inservice, making technology available, expressions of appreciation, and forceful messages from all levels of society that teaching is an honorable and significant profession.

RECOMMENDATIONS

• ***Teacher certification standards should be reviewed and revised to align them more***

closely with the skills and competencies needed in today's classrooms. In each state, administrators, teachers, higher education leaders and state officials should reach consensus on training needs for future teachers. The same process should be followed in determining new skills and training for school administrators.

• ***More minorities should be encouraged to choose teaching careers.*** Full scholarships might be offered as an incentive to promising candidates. Career information should be shared with young people when they enter secondary schools, to help them make an appropriate choice and to plan an academic program that will lead them to college and to teaching. Solid multicultural education programs should be provided for all staff.

• ***The school year and school day should be restructured to allow for investments in continuous staff development for teachers and administrators.*** Schools should be seen as educational institutions that are also learning communities for the adults within them. Local leadership must be given the flexibility and resources (by state and federal government) to dramatically change the environment for teaching and learning.

• ***The best technologies should be available to every teacher and administrator in the nation's schools.*** However, substantial monetary assistance will be needed. The promise of revolutionary technologies in the classroom will remain a province of only a few as long as school districts cannot afford to make them available to everyone. What is particularly distressing about unequal access to the new technologies is the evidence that creative programs using computers and other equipment can greatly enhance the learning potential of disadvantaged and otherwise at-risk students. Yet, they are least likely to have them.

ISSUE NO. 7
SAFE, DISCIPLINED AND DRUG FREE SCHOOLS

Every school administrator, every teacher, every parent and, essentially, every student in the nation wants schools to be safe and free of the social ills that ravage many neighborhoods surrounding the schools. Educators cannot ignore the problems students bring with them to school.

Likewise, national, state and community policymakers and leaders should not ignore the conditions that produce these problems–among them poverty, easy access to drugs, media messages encouraging unhealthful behavior, and the failure of social services to provide consistent, long-term support to those who struggle with a variety of family stresses.

Next to parents, school leaders and teachers understand best how young people fall prey to unwise choices and self-destructive behavior. They know that messages to children and youth need to go beyond simply the decision to use or not to use drugs. They know that personal self-esteem is essential for each student to reach his or her potential and to live a creative and fulfilling life.

If there were no demand for illicit drugs, the problem would fade. However, many young people in our nation suffer from a sense of hopelessness. They are buffeted by worsening social and economic conditions; confused about their place in a fast-changing society; influenced by often negative role models from the news media and even from home, and disappointed by their prospects for getting a good job, forming their own family, and even obtaining basic health insurance.

Making schools drug free and disciplined will take a great deal of social responsibility on the part of all citizens and their leaders at the federal, state and local levels.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ***Substance abuse should be treated, along with alcohol, tobacco and poor nutrition, as a societal and school health issue.*** Schools should work with local, state and federal health promotion agencies and officials to ensure access to adequate and consistent health care for children and youth. A health coordinator might be appointed in each school, as appropriate, to focus on the health needs of the whole child and to help young people avoid self-destructive behaviors.

- ***Strong state and community collaborations should be created to address health issues affecting children and youth.*** At the heart of these efforts should be the promotion of positive health choices. While drug-free zones might provide a start, such actions only rearrange the problems rather than eliminate them.

Community service projects, among others, can help build self-esteem and possibly reduce the number of young people who resort to drugs and other unhealthy behaviors.

• ***The federal government must fulfill its obligation to fully fund programs that are designed to enhance the education of young people and create hope–such as Head Start and Chapter 1 programs for the disadvantaged.*** Positive prevention is an essential first step. In addition, the federal government must provide even greater support in combatting the drug problem.

• ***Social service and law enforcement officials should support schools in becoming safe havens from drugs and violence.*** However, it should be understood that, even with stronger enforcement of laws by police in school neighborhoods, teachers and administrators cannot absolutely guarantee that acts of violence will not occur. Schools can develop policies insisting that personnel be drug free; establish fair and consistent codes of behavior for students; and take safety precautions. However, law enforcement officials must also play a role in giving prompt attention to a range of concerns stretching from suspected child abuse to the control of weapons and violence in schools.

Some Broader Contexts

President George Bush and the nation's governors placed their partnership efforts for improving public education into four basic contexts: flexibility and accountability, restructuring, the federal government's financial role, and assuring accountability.

In each of these important areas, local school district leaders need a voice and a place at the table, because it is in the schools where these issues ultimately will be handled. Further, there are some issues not addressed in the Summit communique that should be on the agenda of federal and state policymakers.

ISSUE NO. 8
FLEXIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

RECOMMENDATIONS

• ***State and federal policymakers need to fully understand the educational impact of their actions.*** To fully understand the issues of

flexibility and accountability, these policymakers need to support a comprehensive, consistent system of data collection. The information they receive will help them better understand how their actions are helping or inhibiting education and serve as a means for ensuring accountability. Any techniques used to gather this type of data should require a minimum of paperwork.

- ***State and federal programs should be fully funded for the long-term.*** In fact, the lack of adequate, ongoing funding is often a greater inhibitor to flexibility and accountability than accompanying regulations. While regulations are needed to serve as basic guidelines, some programs would benefit from less regulation and greater freedom. Examples include teacher employment and special education.
- ***Accountability measures should provide flexibility in meeting goals.*** Schools would rather productively spend time and resources on attaining and assessing the outcomes of schooling than on assuring adherence to rigid guidelines covering items such as staffing ratios and minutes spent on various curriculum areas.
- ***Technology should be made available to keep appropriate records and to make needed data continuously available to classroom teachers, building principals and district decisionmakers.*** States may wish to investigate how better use of technology could reduce paperwork for local schools.

ISSUE NO. 9
RESTRUCTURING

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ***Leaders at all levels need to keep in mind that restructuring means different things to different people and might involve changes in the curriculum (what we teach); modifications in the way we organize for instruction; variations in federal-state-local relationships; increased participation in decisionmaking; school-based management; reform in the systems for preparing, certifying, and compensating educators; taking a hard look at the governance or financing structures; dealing more effectively with at-risk students; and simply fostering changes in the way people think.***

• *State and federal government need to provide the flexibility for school districts to make constructive changes, to take risks, make mistakes and take the necessary time for restructuring efforts.*

• *State and federal government need to provide "venture capital" and other incentives to help school districts attempt new approaches.* Policymaking that ignores the resources and time needed will not produce the results that the President, governors and educators envision.

• *Knowledge, goals, initiative, flexibility and resources should be considered as basic when restructuring of schools is discussed.*

• *In dealing with restructuring, the bottom line should always be a better education for students, not the promotion of one technique over another.* Choice, for example, while presented as a quick fix, is only one of several techniques. The best possible "structure" results in community, parents, board members, administrators, teachers and others working in concert, each playing a key role, to ensure student success. State and federal government should support significant local efforts.

ISSUE NO. 10
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S FINANCIAL ROLE

RECOMMENDATIONS

• *Since the President was involved in identifying broad goals for education, the American people should demand that the federal government also meet its financial responsibility to fully fund any mandated programs.*

• *The federal government should provide "venture capital" for schools to use in developing innovative methods for instruction.*

• *Full federal funding should be provided to address equity issues; establish developmental child care and early childhood programs for disadvantaged families; address the needs of growing numbers of at-risk students; better coordinate and lead youth training programs, especially among minorities; and support other programs requiring federal support that flow from Summit deliberations.*

• *The federal government should provide funding for a strong research agenda, based on local school*

needs, which will ultimately help improve education for students.

Federal attention currently is focused on expanding parental choice as an answer to higher performance of students. Choice is one tool among many and must be considered in the context of furthering the nation's goals of equity and excellence for all students in the schools. It also should be pointed out that choice as a policy alternative is limited by the goals of desegregation in many cities and by sparse populations in many rural areas. Any choice program should offer legitimate choices or alternatives to choose from, not simply place one school in competition with another.

ISSUE NO. 11
ASSURING ACCOUNTABILITY

RECOMMENDATIONS

- *The President and the governors have pledged that they will be accountable for the goals they have set. Therefore, we urge them to provide the resources and leadership to encourage development of an accountability system that is fair, reflects the best thinking on assessment of progress, and addresses long-term rather than quick-fix goals.*

- *Accountability measures should be based on outcomes, assessing learning and social development, rather than on "inputs." They also should be based on what students need to know.*
- *Assessment methods need to be improved to more accurately reflect student progress and to provide data that will help teachers improve education for each student.*
- *Expectations on which accountability is based should be reasonably high and should be developed collaboratively with local educators.*
- *Caution should be exercised in developing national goals to ensure that those goals do not result in an all-inclusive national curriculum.*
- *Since the President and the governors have announced they will develop a report card on schools, report cards should also be developed to report on the level of contributions to better education made by the President and each governor.*

WHAT WAS LEFT OUT?

Several important issues are noticeably absent from the Education Summit's communique. Here are some of the issues that deserve the attention of the President and the governors.

- Education does not exist in a vacuum, but the Charlottesville document seems to paint it that way. The nation's political leadership must ask, as it deliberates each standard, how other policies and resources, in addition to those of the public schools, can be used to help attain desired goals. There exists an inevitable connection between improved student achievement, for example, and the ability of those students to learn, to set their own goals, and to benefit from the coordinated support they need.
- The Summit document did not recognize the enormous cultural and demographic shifts occurring in the country and directly affecting the nation's school population. As a country, we need to both respond to and capitalize on the new potential strengths these shifts are bringing.
- The Summit did not directly address education for citizenship. While the issues identified by the President and governors reflect a great deal of concern about economics, no doubt influenced by thoughtful leaders in American business, they reflect little concern about our critical need for citizenship education.
- Little attention was given to broader issues of student health, the breakdown in the family, the growth in the number of non-English speaking students, education for the handicapped, inequitable funding, the growing problems faced by schools in big cities, and the seeming movement of our nation toward a "two-tier" society. If education continues to improve and 25 percent of children still live in poverty, in communities burdened with unemployment, underemployment, crime and hopelessness, we need to ask how childrens' lives would be better or a society stronger. We cannot educate children and expect them to passively accept massive social and economic inequities.

AND FINALLY...

We hope the Summit process will recognize the great contributions of our public schools to the nation's success. Education truly is the engine of a democracy.

As the President and the governors further discuss far-reaching goals for education, we would like to have them recognize that our schools have been ill-served by short-term and short-sighted planning. Therefore, to avoid pitfalls and to ensure the viability of any recommendations or decisions, the President and governors must regularly and often hear the voices of local school leaders. As we reach for the stars in education, let's reach together. Education is a shared endeavor. Building a vision for it should also be shared.

Ultimately, we should all realize that the real summit in education is found at the local school.

OUR THANKS

AASA is grateful to a group of thoughtful and talented school administrators who shared ideas and concerns that are reflected in this publication. All spent a full day at the AASA headquarters considering each of the goals and broader context issues that emerged from the Education Summit. Those administrators include:

- Jim Buchanan, *superintendent of schools*, Fremont, Nebraska.
- Carolyn Downey, *superintendent*, Kyrene Elementary School District, Tempe, Arizona.
- Arthur Gosling, *superintendent*, Arlington County Schools, Virginia.
- Harold Patterson, *superintendent*, Guntersville City Schools, Alabama.
- Lee Etta Powell, *superintendent*, Cincinnati Public Schools, Ohio.
- Gina Santangelo, *director of organizational planning and certificated personnel*, El Dorado High School District, Diamond Spring, California.

AASA's post-summit conference was under the direction of AASA Associate Executive Director Gary Marx and Program Director Judy Nash. AASA Executive Director Richard Miller and Michael Cohen of the National Governors Association participated in portions of the meeting. Washington, D.C.-based education writer Anne Lewis monitored the conference and prepared an initial manuscript. Final editing and production were handled by AASA Director of Communications Luann Fulbright.

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